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SUBJECT: ITALY ON ZIMBABWE: PEER PRESSURE BEST HOPE FOR

DEMOCRACY

REF: A. BRUSSELS 1434

[1B.](#) SECSTATE 49517

[1C.](#) SECSTATE 42137

CLASSIFIED BY: POL M C T. COUNTRYMAN FOR REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D)

SUMMARY

[11.](#) (C) MFA'S OFFICE DIRECTOR FOR SOUTHERN AFRICAN AFFAIRS REPLIED TO OUR RECENT DEMARCHE AND LETTER ON ZIMBABWE. THE GOI SHARES THE EU POINT OF VIEW THAT CONDEMNATIONS AND SANCTIONS ARE NECESSARY. HOWEVER, MARINI BELIEVES THAT THEY WILL PROBABLY PROVE INSUFFICIENT TO FORCE CHANGE. THE ROLE OF REGIONAL ACTORS IS KEY, AND SOUTH AFRICA POSSESSES ECONOMIC LEVERS THAT CAN INFLUENCE MUGABE. THE U.S. AND EU NEED TO CONSULT CLOSELY AND CONVINCE REGIONAL STATES TO PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE. THE EU WILL MONITOR LEGAL AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND CONSIDER ADDITIONAL "SMART SANCTIONS." END SUMMARY.

[12.](#) (U) ON MARCH 14 POLOFF DELIVERED REF B DEMARCHE ON ZIMBABWE'S ELECTION. POST DELIVERED REF C LETTER TO PM
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BERLUSCONI FROM SECRETARY POWELL ON THE CRISIS IN ZIMBABWE MARCH 6. IN A MARCH 21 MEETING, CONSIGLIERE GIORGIO MARINI, MFA OFFICE DIRECTOR FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA, PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING RESPONSE AND INSIGHTS:

ITALY SUPPORTS THE EU POSITION, BUT ...

[13.](#) (C) MARINI EXPLAINED THAT THE GOI FULLY SUPPORTED THE EU POSITION ON ZIMBABWE. RECALLING THE FEB. 18 EU DECISION TO IMPOSE SANCTIONS, MARINI SAID THE GOI VIEWED THESE MEASURES AS A NECESSARY RESPONSE TO THE GOZ'S REFUSAL TO GIVE GROUND ON PRESS AND JUDICIAL FREEDOMS DURING A DIALOGUE WITH THE EU BASED ON THE COTONOU AGREEMENT. THE EU APPROACH WAS CALIBRATED TO AVOID WEAKENING THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL OPPOSITION TO MUGABE'S ACTIONS BY LEAVING AN OPENING TO THOSE WHO WOULD PAINT IT AS NEO-IMPERIALISM. HOWEVER, MARINI'S PERSONAL OPINION WAS THAT EU SANCTIONS WERE UNLIKELY TO BRING ABOUT DEMOCRATIC CHANGE.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PEER PRESSURE

[14.](#) (C) WHAT COULD BE MORE EFFECTIVE WOULD BE CONDEMNATION OF MUGABE'S ACTIONS BY REGIONAL POWERS IN ADDITION TO THE WEST. MARINI SUGGESTED THAT ZIMBABWE'S DEPENDENCE ON SOUTH AFRICA FOR OIL AND GAS PROVIDED A KEY LEVER FOR PRESSURE. SOUTH AFRICA'S IMPORTANCE AS A MARKET FOR ZIMBABWE GAVE IT FURTHER LEVERAGE.

[15.](#) (C) ASKED WHY HE THOUGHT MBEKI HAD EVENTUALLY SUPPORTED
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THE COMMONWEALTH'S EXPULSION OF ZIMBABWE, MARINI CITED UK AND U.S. PRESSURE AND SOUTH AFRICA'S KEY ROLE IN THE NEW ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT (NEPAD). ONLY WHEN HIS "BACK WAS TO THE WALL" WAS MBEKI WILLING TO OVERCOME DOMESTIC PRESSURES AND OPPOSE MUGABE. THE SITUATION WAS COMPLICATED FOR THE GSA, BECAUSE, ON THE ONE HAND, MUGABE HAD STOOD WITH THE ANC AGAINST APARTHEID IN SPITE OF HIS PERSONAL RIVALRY WITH MANDELA FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC). ON THE OTHER HAND, SOUTH AFRICA WANTED TO HEAD OFF A CIVIL WAR ON ITS BORDER CAUSED BY POLITICAL OUTRAGE, IN ORDER TO AVOID AN INFUX OF REFUGEES. FURTHERMORE, MBEKI WANTED TO MAINTAIN AN UNTARNISHED LEADERSHIP ROLE IN NEPAD, SINCE HE RECOGNIZED THAT THE KEY TO AFRICA'S FUTURE WAS WESTERN PARTNERSHIP AND INVESTMENT.

[16.](#) (C) PER REF A, MARINI CALLED FOR CLOSE U.S.-EU COORDINATION THAT INCLUDED NIGERIA AND SOUTH AFRICA. SUPPORT OF AFRICAN AND LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES IN THE UNHCR COULD

ALSO PROVE IMPORTANT.

17. (C) MARINI PROVIDED A DRAFT COPY OF A REPLY FROM BERLUSCONI TO SECRETARY POWELL THAT HAD NOT YET BEEN CLEARED BY THE PM'S OFFICE. IT SAYS THAT BERLUSCONI SHARES U.S. CONCERNS AND VIEWS ON THE LEGITIMACY OF THE ELECTION AND IS PLEASED WITH THE RECENT COMMONWEALTH DECISION TO SUSPEND ZIMBABWE. AN EU TROIKA WILL CONSULT WITH SADC COUNTRIES TO IMPRESS UPON THEM THE NECESSITY TO STAND UP FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	ACQ-00	CA-01	CEA-01
	CIAE-00	CIP-00	COME-00	CTME-00	INL-00	USNW-00	DODE-00
	DOEE-00	DATE-00	WHA-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EAP-00	EB-00
	EUR-00	EXIM-01	E-00	FAAE-00	VC-00	FRB-00	H-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	ITC-01	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00
	AC-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00
	PC-01	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	SSO-00
	SS-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	VO-03	R-00	EPAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2929
INFO AMEMBASSY ABUJA
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY HARARE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUANDA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
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AND DEMOCRACY.

EU'S NEXT STEPS DEPEND ON MUGABE

18. (C) ASKED WHAT THE EU PROPOSED NOW, MARINI POINTED TO THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE BARCELONA EUROPEAN COUNCIL (MARCH 15-16), WHICH STATE THAT THE EU "RESOLVES TO MONITOR DEVELOPMENTS CLOSELY ... AND WILL CONSIDER POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL TARGETED MEASURES" AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE. THE EU WILL MONITOR THE ACTIONS TAKEN AGAINST ARRESTED OPPOSITION LEADER TSVANGARAI AS WELL AS WHETHER MUGABE FORMS A UNITY GOVERNMENT. POTENTIAL FUTURE EU STEPS INCLUDE PLACING SANCTIONS ON THE SPOUSES AND CHILDREN OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSERS SANCTIONED IN THE FEB. 18 DECISION.
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